THE REVELATION OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST FROM HEAVEN:

BEING THE

SUBJECT

OF A

DISCOURSE

Delivered June 19, 1792,

IN THE

PARISH CHURCH of MARTHAM,

NORFOLK,

AT THE FUNERAL OF THE

Rev. THOMAS BOWMAN, M. A.

Late Vicar of that Parish,

By STEPHEN WEBSTER, M. A.

Vicar of CLAXTON, *Norfolk*; Fellow of MAGDALEN COLLEGE, *Cambridge*; & late Curate of *Martham*.

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TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF THE PARISH OF

MARTHAM and of CAWSTON,

AND TO ALL THOSE SERIOUS CHRISTIANS WHO ATTENDED THE MINISTRY OF THE LATE

THOMAS BOWMAN.

IT is in compliance with your requeſt, the following Diſcourſe is publiſhed; an inviolable attachment among the more ſerious of you, to your late Miniſter, would leave me inexcuſable were I to withhold my conſent:—It therefore becomes a point of duty; that conſideration entirely frees me from the charge of oſtentation in making it public.—The ſubject is weighty; Mr. Bowman made choice of it; conſider it therefore as his laſt addreſs to you; in that view it may be acceptable; ſhould it be the means, under

under God, of preventing only one ſin,—of putting up one petition for mercy, or of one ardent breathing after holineſs, the end of publiſhing it will, in a great degree, be anſwered; but ſhould it be inſtrumental in turning one ſinner "from the error of his ways, and of ſaving a ſoul from death,"—what could I do, but ſincerely rejoice and give God the glory of working by ſo mean an inſtrument? It will be an infinitely better proof of it's being ſcriptural than any charge of Methodiſm or Fanaticiſm, which may be levelled at it by thoſe whoſe minds "the God of this world hath blinded, leſt the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt ſhould ſhine unto them."

Thoſe who love and experience "the truth as it is in Jeſus," will gladly receive it from the weakeſt diſpenſers of it, and the conſolation they may derive, will, in the honor and glory of it, be aſcribed to him "who giveth not the ſpirit by meaſure:"—This caſe is in point as to yourſelves. Your ready reception of my labors for the ſhort ſpace of four months, diſcovered not only your love for the truth, but a ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, which characteriſes thoſe who receive "the truth and love of it," at the ſame time it induced me to hope, God had in ſome reſpects made "me to differ," or at leaſt to give him thanks, that my judgment in divine things was ſo far informed, as with a degree of approbation

approbation and of acknowledged conſolation on your part, to ſucceed ſo great a man in the church of God, who had long and aſſiduouſly labored amongſt you, and "had fed you according to the integrity of his heart."

To you who knew him, little needs be ſaid reſpecting his abilities; he was a great ſcholar, as well as a ſound divine, an able diſputant and a cloſe reaſoner; as his Review and his Letters to a clergyman in this neighbourhood, which were publiſhed in the Goſpel Magazine many years ſince, evidently prove;—he was ſtrictly logical in all his deductions, remarkably connected in all his public diſcourſes, which were always extempore; ſometimes addreſſing himſelf to the paſſions, generally ſpeaking to the heart;—he poſſeſſed ſuch an amazing fund of ſpiritual knowledge, that tho' he preached three times on the Lord's day (twice in his pariſh church and in the evening at his parſonage-houſe), as well as in the week day; yet, it ſeems, he was never guilty of tautology, but always had a happy variety of matter and expreſſion:—In private converſation he was very inſtructive, frequently entertaining; he was maſter of every ſubject on which he converſed or wrote; he has truly gratified others as well as myſelf, with his judicious and pleaſing remarks.—I have heard ſome ingenious

genious gentlemen of the faculty generouſly acknowledge his information in their profeſſion was ſurpriſingly extenſive:—Muſic in his younger days was his darling ſtudy, he was almoſt an enthuſiaſtic amateur of the ſcience; formerly he publiſhed ſeveral things, and the great Handel uſed to tell him, "he would ſoon be his maſter;" he had thoughts of taking his degree in muſic, but it was providentally over-ruled,—he was deſigned for greater uſefulneſs and called to infinitely more important ſervices in the church of Chriſt, "to turn many from darkneſs to light, from the power of Satan unto God, and to build them up in the moſt holy faith;" for which he was eminently calculated, both by his knowledge of the human heart—of the wiles of Satan—and by an intimate acquaintance with divine things, and with the power of godlineſs. He came from Holbeach in Lincolnſhire, and was preſented to the vicarage of Martham in the year 1758, by Dr. Bullock, Dean of Norwich; which circumſtance was ſolely owing to a Faſt Sermon he preached at Holbeach, from Lam. 3. 40. in the year 1756; it was ſent to the Dean by one of his tenants, who lived in the pariſh of Holbeach, and highly pleaſed him;—by ſuch apparently accidental circumſtances does God often bring to paſs the greateſt good to men and glory to himſelf.

In

It was a little after this, that he began to ſee more *clearly* into the great truths of the goſpel; his firſt edition of the Principles of Chriſtianity appeared in the year 1764;—and in 1768 he publiſhed his Review of the Doctrines of the Reformation, a work deſervedly admired by every conſiſtent member and miniſter of the church of England, and by all who eſpouſe the doctrines of the reformation. His controverſy with the Rev. Mr. ——— reſpecting the nature of juſtifying faith and of good works, ſhowed his ſuperior abilities as well as the advantages of writing on the ſide of truth.—His letters to Mr. B. on Subſcription and the Articles, are a judicious and witty reply to an unprovoked attack; in ſhort he was always manifeſtly ſuperior to all his opponents; thirty years he ſpent in the ſervice of the ſanctuary, and was eminently uſeful in his day and generation. In the laſt two or three years he perceived himſelf in a gradual decline, and would frequently ſay, the pain he felt in his ſide would end in his death; when he found himſelf nearly incapacitated from performing the miniſterial functions, he labored under great anxiety leſt he ſhould be unable to procure aſſiſtance from thoſe miniſters who were inſpired with the ſame motives, and aimed at the ſame ends with himſelf: He retained his faculties in their utmoſt vigor to the laſt;

and

and a few months before his death, he ſet to muſic a Poem, compoſed by his intimate friend the Rev. John Newton, Rector of St. Mary Wolnorth, on the death of his wife, which Mr. N. highly values; a week before he died, he ſent out his ſecond addreſs to his Pariſhioners, and on Sunday, June 10, cheerfully converſed with two of his friends, who paid him their laſt viſit, and moſt beautifully illuſtrated and explained a few verſes of Chap. 1. of the Epiſtle to the Epheſians,—"According as he hath choſen us in him, &c. &c." When the time approached that he muſt die, he expreſſed his wiſh of being able to write his thoughts upon a divine ſubject that much engaged his attention; in his utmoſt agonies, for a mortification had ſet in his ſide, he never uttered one repining word;—he was remarkably ſubmiſſive and reſigned, extremely thankful to thoſe who attended him in his illneſs; he would often expreſs his dependance on the faithfulneſs of God:—A friend aſked him how he felt himſelf? I am a happy man, replied he. A little before he expired, he roſe up in his bed and ſaid, "Lord give me ſtrength of body and mind to ſupport me under my ſufferings," and not long after, breathed his laſt, and now

He ſleeps in Jeſus and is bleſt,
How ſweet his ſlumbers are.

Such

Such was Thomas Bowman, a man of fervent piety, poſſeſſed of ſhining natural abilities, which were cultivated by an unremitting application, which ſcarcely ſickneſs and the gradual decays of nature could ſubdue; he entertained an ardent, yet rational zeal for the glory of God, and a ſteady tender regard for the ſpiritual and eternal intereſts of all under his paſtoral care,—he was therefore remarkably owned as an inſtrument of turning many to righteouſneſs; his walk was becoming a miniſter of the ſanctuary —his God therefore did not forſake him in the trying hour; "he had hope in his death, and now he ſhineth as the ſtars for ever and ever."

He left a paper containing the following words:

"I deſire to be buried in the Chancel, on the "north ſide of Mr. Savage, and to have a ſtone "of the ſame ſize and color as his, and that the "following particulars may be engraved on it:— 'Here is depoſited the mortal part of Thomas Bowman, M. A. vicar of this pariſh, he died (June 15, 1792), aged 64, in hope of a bleſſed reſurrection to eternal life, thro' our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.'

"The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."

"I wish that Mr. Stephen Webster may bury me, as he was the first Gospel Minister who offered me his assistance; I desire also, that immediately after the funeral service, he may preach from the above words,—2 Thes. 1, 7, 8."

And now, Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer for you is, that this dispensation may be exceedingly profitable and useful to you; and that you may be followers of him, as far as he was of Christ, and may the God of Peace be with you;—pray for us,—that our number may be increased an hundred fold,—that, as he did, we may stand fast in the faith, and habitually aiming at the glory of God, may as faithfully and successfully dispense his word, till the time of our appointed change shall come.

I am your very sincere, affectionate

Friend, & faithful humble Servant,

STEPHEN WEBSTER.

THURTON, *Norfolk*,
Feb. 22, 1793.

II. *THES.* i. 7. 8.

THE LORD JESUS SHALL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN, WITH HIS MIGHTY ANGELS IN FLAMING FIRE, TAKING VENGANCE ON THEM THAT KNOW NOT GOD, AND THAT OBEY NOT THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

WE have now committed the mortal part of your dear departed Miniſter to the ſilent grave, the houſe appointed for all the living,—it was his wiſh we ſhould meet on this occaſion, and ſurely we can't ſpend a few minutes more profitably than by making ſome reflections on the event, both as it relates to him, and to yourſelves.—A joyful, glorious change has been effected in his ſtate—a ſerious and particularly intereſting diſpenſation of providence has taken place

place towards you, who were a ſhort time ſince his flock; the objects of his regard, his eſteemed charge; his well-beloved people—towards you amongſt whom he has indefatigably labored; over whom he has long and faithfully watched,—towards you, whoſe ſpiritual and eternal intereſts laid near his heart, even in the lateſt moments of his exiſtence, and were carried before the throne of God in the pangs of diſſolving nature—towards you, who have heard the word of life from thoſe lips, which ſhall never more ſound the glad tidings of ſalvation in your ears—never again adminiſter the wine and oil of conſolation to the afflicted and wounded conſcience, nor by the terrors of the Lord perſuade ſinners to "flee from the wrath to come." The bond of union is diſſolved! The endearing tye that once united the heart of an affectionate paſtor to his people is cut aſunder for ever! Eſcaped from its impriſonment in clay, his immortal ſpirit is returned to him that gave it—has given "his anſwer to him that ſent him"—has ſurrendered up his ſtewardſhip, related the ſucceſs of his miniſtrations and labors amongſt you, and being "found faithful unto death" has received the crown of glory and "entered into the joy of the Lord"—whilſt you are left behind to feel and lament your loſs—"your maſter is taken from your head to day;" and you may now take up Eliſha's lamentation,

"my

"My Father! my Father! the chariots of Iſrael and the horſemen thereof." For 30 years you have been favored with the pure, unadulterated Goſpel; you have had abundance of the milk and honey of the word—Manna has deſcended plentifully amongſt you—and if you have not been careful to improve your opportunities and gather of it for your own wants and "for the famine of your houſes"—it is unreaſonable to expect a continuance of the bleſſing—it is contrary to God's uſual dealings with his creatures—in ſuch caſe, a dearth is to be apprehended. When any bleſſing, and above all, when a preached Goſpel has not been thankfully received, duly prized and honored, God withdraws it—he removes the candleſtic out of its place, "then darkneſs covers it, and groſs darkneſs the people"—then the days approach, in which, ſaith the Lord, "I will ſend a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirſt for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord, and they ſhall wander from ſea to ſea, and from the north to the eaſt, and they ſhall run to and fro to ſeek the word of the Lord, and ſhall not find it." Amos, 8. What a heavy judgment is this upon a people! May you never feel the weight of it.

Tis not my intention to emblazon the character of your deceaſed Miniſter, nor to burn in-

cenſe

cenſe to his merit; yet its a tribute of reſpect which you all owe him, as your paſtor,—to call to your recollection how earneſtly and pathetically he uſed to warn you to flee from the wrath denounced againſt ſin and ſinners—how he would exhort "and beſeech you to be reconciled to God;" how frequently from this pulpit he has enforced the neceſſity of your ſeeing and feeling yourſelves as ſinners juſtly condemned by the holy law of God, both for original and actual tranſgreſſions—of your being thoroughly awaked to a ſenſe of your danger, while out of Chriſt, of the bitterneſs and miſery of an unconverted ſtate; and of your renouncing every dependance for ſalvation on your own performances, duties, and good works, &c.—I would remind you, how often he has recommended you to conſider the dignity & excellence of Chriſt as the Saviour of ſinners; the freeneſs and fulneſs of his ſalvation to anſwer all your wants and it's ſuitableneſs to every caſe. Juſtification by faith in him, has been held forth as a ſcriptural doctrine, full of comfort, and the very foundation of all religion.—How faithfully has he informed you of the nature and neceſſity of the new birth by the operation of the ſpirit of God, producing in the ſoul an entire change of the bias of the will and affections; a death unto ſin and a new birth unto righteouſneſs—and of the quickening and ſanctifying

fying influence to effect holineſs in the heart, life and converſation. Theſe things have been repeated again & again—Sabbath after Sabbath; may you never forget them—may they be "as nails faſtened in a ſure place."

Remember his works of faith and labors of love, how affectionately as the father of his flock, and tender ſhepherd, he would "beſeech you, by the mercies of God, to preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable to God;" his rebukes and reproofs for ſin, which were "as ſcourges in your ſides and as thorns in your eyes,"—going out and in before you in the ſpirit of meekneſs and forbearance; at the ſame time, ſupporting the dignity of a chriſtian miniſter and maintaining a vigor of conduct, that *awed his oppoſers and triumphed over their deſigns.*—He did not "handle the word of God deceitfully," yet "being crafty he caught ſome of you with guile," gladly ſpending and being ſpent in the cauſe of God. He did not content himſelf with the bare performance of the *accuſtomed* duty of a pariſh once in the Lord's day, but "labored more abundantly than us all," "leaving us an example of paſtoral diligence that we ſhould follow his ſteps;" in this reſpect you will probably feel the difference between one who regarded your ſouls and one who regards them not; between "taking the overſight of the flock by conſtraint for filthy lucre—

lucre—and willingly, of a ready mind"—between "lording it over God's heritage and being ensamples to the flock." You, who were his moſt determined, yet cauſeleſs enemies, cannot, dare not, but bear witneſs, that he ſought not your property, but the welfare of your ſouls; not "yours, but you—not the gain of the world, but of godlineſs;" tho' "the more abundantly he "loved you the leſs he was loved;" far be it from me to include you all in this deſcription,—the conſciences of ſome of you will bear you record, "that if it had been poſſible you would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to him." His eaſe and reputation in the world he was not ſolicitous about, but only that he might "ſhew himſelf approved unto God, who, "counted him worthy, putting him in the mi-"niſtry, and made him an able miniſter of the "new Teſtament—a workman that needed not "to be aſhamed." The preſent day, and our church in particular, produces few ſuch zealous advocates, and powerful champions "for the truth as it is in Jeſus."—His review of the doctrines of the Reformation, publiſhed in 1768, has diſcovered his ſentiments on this head, and proved beyond contradiction, that the doctrinal articles of the eſtabliſhed church are in every point of view ſcriptural, and are incapable of an Arian, Socinian, or Arminian conſtruction.—His

"Principles

"Principles of Chriſtianity" is a work that has been extremely uſeful, and the *acknowledged inſtrument* of the converſion of many in other parts of the kingdom:—This and his Thoughts "on the diſcipline of the church of England" diſcover his learning and abilities as a writer, his piety as a chriſtian, and his zeal as an evangelical preacher; that he was a true ſon of the church of England, holding her doctrines "in a pure conſcience and in faith unfeigned."—His *Cauſtoniana* proves how indefatigable he was in endeavoring to promote the edification of his extra-parochial hearers, who will bear their teſtimony, he labored for them inceſſantly, was chargeable to none of them, but preached to them the Goſpel of God freely for the ſpace of 25 years,—all his writings diſcover an habitual concern for the glory of God and the good of ſouls.—Nothing could be a ſtronger proof of his great regard for you and tender care for your beſt intereſts than this:—A ſhort time before his death, one of the officiating miniſters aſked him, if there was any particular ſubject he wiſhed to be enforced upon his people,—"I leave it entirely to you, replied he, "my "wiſh is, they may have a few warnings more,"—the nearer he approached his eternal ſtate, the more clear were his views of the

preciouſneſs

preciouſneſs of the ſoul and the importance of your entertaining a due ſenſe of eternal things: He would frequently pray for mercy on your ſouls,—and "my people, my dear people; Martham, dear Martham," was the language of of his lateſt moments:—A ſhort time before he expired, he ſeemed to be deſirous of ſpeaking or writing his thoughts upon a ſubject on which he was meditating; methinks, how clear—how full and expreſſive they would have been; how they would have ſavored of the language of the heavenly Canaan, and partook of the nature of angelic raptures—or, how awfully and convincingly would he have ſpoke of the holineſs and juſtice of God in the eternal puniſhment of the wicked, of the gnaſhing teeth, and gnaſhing worm, the agonizing conſcience & inextinguiſhable flame:—Would not he have addreſſed you to this effect? "Prepare, prepare for eternity, ye "frail ſhort lived mortals, ye near neighbors to the "world of ſpirits, ye borderers on Heaven or Hell "make ready; looſen your hearts from earth, and "all that it contains, weigh anchor," "& prepare "to launch away into the boundleſs ocean of eter- "nity, which methinks is now within your ken "and roars within your hearing." It is at your deceaſed friend's deſire, I am to ſpeak to you from the words of the text; they may be conſidered therefore as a meſſage from the dead to each

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of you, they are ſingularly grand and ſolemn—adapted to expreſs the feelings of one who was taking his final leave of this world to appear before the judge of quick and dead. May our ſouls be ſolemnized now we are entering on a ſubject ſo tremendous, conſidering we are very ſoon to act an intereſting part in the ſolemnities of that day when "the Lord Jeſus ſhall be re-"vealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels "in flaming fire, taking vengance on them that "know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel "of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt." It may not be improper to obſerve in a way of explanation,—that, Theſſalonica was a large and flouriſhing city, and the metropolis of Macedonia; it is now called by the Italians Salonichi, and is in the poſſeſſion of the Turks;—Paul here planted a Goſpel church—he and Silas were under the neceſſity of fleeing by night from this place; when he arrived at Corinth, he ſent them this epiſtle, by Tychichus; the deſign of which was to ſupport theſe young converts under the trials and perſecutions they endured from the unbelieving Jews and Greeks for the ſake of the Goſpel. The apoſtle makes uſe of a thankſgiving to God for their faith and charity, "and the abounding of their love towards each other," v. 3. How delightful to behold profeſſing Chriſtians endeavoring

voring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace: he glories "in them in the churches of God for their patience and faith in all their perſecutions and tribulations they endured;" for many and great were the perſecutions that befel them, and "all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer perſecution" for the trial of their faith; "which is a manifeſt token of the righteous judgment of God;" ſince the righteous are afflicted and perſecuted in this life, having now their evil things; and the wicked proſper, having their good things; ſo that in this world there is a confuſed adminiſtration in providence, and juſtice does not ſeem to take place: this very thing therefore is a proof, there will be a righteous judgment, in which all things ſhall be ſet right, both to the wicked and alſo to the righteous, whoſe trials and perſecutions are an evidence of their being counted worthy of & meet, by this exerciſe of their graces, for the kingdom of God for which they ſuffer, v. 5. It is in the ſchool of afflictions that the children of God are weaned from the world, their graces exerciſed and increaſed, and they themſelves made meet to be "partakers of the inheritance of the "ſaints in light." Take this with thee, oh! Believer, and may it be a cordial to thy ſoul, "that whom the Lord loveth he chaſteneth & ſcourgeth every one whom he receiveth" into the relation

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of a ſon. Heb. 12, 6, of whom he takes care that he may prepare for and at length receive him to himſelf in a better world; may the preſent diſpenſation, the loſs of your under ſhepherd, be amongſt the number of ſanctified afflictions, and be the means of endearing to you the great "Shepherd & Biſhop of your ſouls." The Apoſtle proceeds, "ſeeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompenſe tribulation to them that trouble his children, v. 6." Men may think it a righteous thing they ſhould be rewarded for perſecuting the followers of Chriſt, ſuppoſing, with Saul, "they do God ſervice," but in the ſight of God it is a point of juſtice, to render tribulation to ſuch troublers of God's Iſrael, ſometimes in this world; and certainly in the world to come they ſhall receive "that they have deſerved," even "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, "outer darkneſs, devouring flames & everlaſting burning"—and alſo "it is a righteous thing with God to grant" to you who are troubled and perſecuted for righteouſneſs ſake, reſt (v. 7) from all theſe outward trials and from the temptations of Satan, and the effects of ſin, with us the Apoſtles of Chriſt Jeſus, and the goodly fellowſhip of the prophets, in the grave and at the coming of the Lord Jeſus, when "he ſhall be revealed from "Heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming "fire, taking vengeance on them that know not

"God,

"God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt." There is then a remarkable period when theſe glorious events ſhall be accompliſhed, i. e. at the revelation of the Lord Jeſus, whoſe coming to judgment is frequently expreſſed in ſcripture by his revelation or appearance, "when Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear." Col. 3. 4.—"When the chief ſhepherd ſhall appear,—1 Pet. 5. 4."—Again, "we know that when he appears, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is,—1 John, 3. 2." The principal reaſon that his coming is called a Revelation, appears to be this: the government of the world is in this life managed inviſibly to the carnal eyes of ſinners, and it is faith alone which diſcerns that ſecret influence, by which all this apparent confuſion and diſorder is turned to wiſe purpoſes. Things will remain in this poſture till the ſolemn appearance of Jeſus Chriſt, which will place them in a different light, will tear away the ſcales from the eyes of ſinners, and his glory and goodneſs will ſhine illuſtriouſly, that it will not be in the power of the moſt ſtupid and hardened ſinner not to diſcern them,—he will then be revealed to the ſenſes of mankind, and "every eye ſhall ſee him, and they ſhall look on him whom they have pierced," and not one of them ſhall be able to cover themſelves from his preſence, and he will reveal himſelf and his terrors

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in their ſouls with irreſiſtible force.—The words of the text diſcover to us the following heads:—1. The perſon to be revealed,—"the Lord Jeſus. 2. The manner of his appearance,—"with his mighty angels in flaming fire." 3. The end of his being thus revealed,—"to take vengeance." 4. The objects of this vengance,—"they who know not God, &c." 5. The nature of this vengeance,—1. The perſon to preſide as univerſal judge in the ſolemnities of this great day, is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; hear is own words upon the ſubject—"The father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the ſon, and hath given him authority to execute judgment,"—John, 5. 22. 27.—In the old Teſtament it is in many places ſaid, that God is this Judge; as in Ecc. 3. 17. "God ſhall judge the righteous and the wicked." "The Heavens ſhall declare his righteouſneſs, for God is judge himſelf,"—Ps. 50. 6,—but the word tranſlated God, is Elohim in the original, and refers to Jeſus Chriſt, as is evident from many paſſages in the New Teſtament, "he will judge the world in righteouſneſs by that man whom he hath ordained,"—Acts, 17. 31. "In the day when God ſhall judge the ſecrets of men by Jeſus Chriſt";—Rom. 2. 16.—"To teſtify, that it is he which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead,"—Acts, 10. 42. It is evident, then from comparing one

paſſage

paſſage of ſcripture with another, that the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is this univerſal judge.—Again, whenever in the Old Teſtament diſpenſation there was any appearance or manifeſtation of a divine perſon, it ſeems to have been "*the eſſential word*," that was to become incarnate—to Adam in the garden—to Abraham in the plain of Moreh—to Iſaac and Jacob—to Moſes in the burning buſh; all generally underſtood to have been the eternal word,—for God the Father and God the Spirit are never ſaid to appear to man; on the contrary, Jeſus aſſures us, "ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor ſeen his ſhape,"—John, 5. 37. "No man hath ſeen God at any time,"—1 John, 4. 12."—"Nor can ſee,"—1 Tim. 6. 16.—As he has therefore been revealed in antient times under the character of the "*word* to be made fleſh and to dwell amongſt us," ſo now, as the *Godman and Mediator-Judge*. There ſeems to be a peculiar beauty and propriety in Jeſus Chriſt being this Judge; for, 1ſt. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made,"—John, 1. 3,—He is alſo "appointed heir of all things,"—Heb. 1. 2, and "the Father hath given all things into his hands",—John, 3. 35,—therefore all creatures are his property and owe him love and obedience; he knows what meaſure of each is due to him.—Now the New Teſtament is the

Revelation

Revelation of the method of Salvation thro' him; is called "the Goſpel of Jeſus,"—"the Goſpel of the grace of God,"—the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt,"—it is glad tidings to a guilty world, according to which God will judge the ſecrets of all men by Jeſus Chriſt,—Rom. 2. 16, which Goſpel men are bound to receive and to believe; he is therefore peculiarly concerned in man's reception or rejection of this righteous diſpenſation which he has ſet up in the world, and is the moſt proper perſon to diſtribute rewards and puniſhments to obedience or diſobedience. Chriſt has promulged his law, annexed the ſanctions,—he that believeth ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be damned,—Mark, 16. 16; it is therefore highly fit and becoming in him to put them in execution—"to make known the riches "of his glory on the veſſels of mercy, which he "hath afore prepared unto glory—and to ſhew "his wrath and make his power known to the "veſſels of wrath fitted to deſtruction,"—Rom. 9. 22. 23.—Again, 2. Chriſt Jeſus is the promiſed ſeed of the woman, who ſhould bruiſe the ſerpent's head and cruſh his empire; here is then an admirable beauty in his being conſtituted judge on this occaſion, the end and deſign of which is to take vengeance on the old ſerpent Satan, and his ſervants and ſubjects, ungodly men—

men—being himself the beginning and the end, the author and fulfiller of his own most gracious promise:—But 3. the grand qualification for this important office, is his being Man as well as God—Godman—Mediator.

The world was placed under the government of a mediator, therefore it was fit it should have a mediatorial judge: it is fit, this high office should be conferred upon him, as an honorable reward for his important services and extreme abasement; "because he humbled himself, therefore God hath highly exalted him by making him Lord & Judge of all,"—Phil. 2: 9.—It is fit that creatures clothed with bodies subject to infirmities, temptations and afflictions, weakness, &c. should be judged by one clothed like themselves, and who was subject to the like—"who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin,—Heb. 4. 15. Hence it is said all judgment is committed to the Son because he is the Son of Man,—John, 5. 22. 27, or *that* son of man spoken of in Daniel, chap. 7; who was not a mere man, but the man that is my *fellow*, saith the Lord of Hosts,—Zec. 23. 7—"God's fellow," and so being both omniscient and omnipotent, is equal to such a work.—And indeed was he man only, he would be infinitely unfit and unequal to the office of universal judge.

but

but he is "Immanuel, God with us," and therefore the fitteſt perſon in the univerſe—all the advantages of divinity and humanity center in him, and render him infinitely fitter for this office than if he were God only:—And laſtly, it is fit that Chriſt ſhould be ſupreme judge, as it will be a great encouragement to his people for their mediator to execute this office; and it may be added; hereby the condemnation of the wicked will be rendered more conſpicuouſly juſt; for if the Mediator, the Saviour, the friend of ſinners condemns them, they muſt be worthy of condemnation indeed,—Oh! conſider this, you who never think of this Jeſus, this auguſt perſonage, this univerſal judge, this almighty king, who ridicule religion—deſpiſe the Saviour of ſinners—and make theſe awful truths the ſubject of your mirth—or who drown reflection in the giddy whirl of pleaſure—or in the midnight madneſs of intoxicating joys; you ſhall ſurely ſee this Jeſus, "who was made in faſhion as a man, "a little lower than the angels crowned with "this glory and honor,"—Heb. 2. 9. "coming "in the clouds of heaven," the place of the viſible reſidence of the godhead:—Hither he was received at his aſcenſion, there he now reſides, encircled with glory & majeſty, there he will be retained until the end of all things, and hence his

his ſaints expect him, and hence will he deſcend,—once he was manifeſted on earth in a ſtate of the deepeſt humiliation; "in the form of a ſervant,"—Phil. 2. 7, "but then will this "Jeſus be revealed from heaven and making the "clouds his chariot and riding on the wings of "the wind,—Ps. 104. 3.

2. The manner of his appearance will be ſuch as becomes the dignity & majeſty of his perſon & office; "with his mighty angels," or as the Greek may be more exactly tranſlated, "with the angels of his power,"—they are frequently the inſtruments by which God exerciſes his power;—theſe noble miniſters of the divine pleaſure are, almoſt in every place, where the laſt judgement is ſpoken of, mentioned as attendants of the great Judge, to heighten the grandeur and ſolemnity of his preſence, when he ſhall come "in his own "glory and his father's, and of his holy angels," —Luke, 9. 26, "deſcending from heaven with "a ſhout, with the voice of the archangel and "with the trump of God,"—Theſ. 4. 16.—They have the character of "mighty" and are ſaid to "excel in ſtrength," of which Sennacherib's army were effectually convinced when one of them "ſmote in one night in the camp of the "Aſſyrians, an hundred and four ſcore and five thouſand men,"—2. Kings, 19. 36—and on this occaſion there is a particular grandeur in this character

character of "mighty" being attributed to them, as prodigiouſly heightening the awfulneſs of the judge, when ten thouſand times ten thouſand powerful executioners attend upon him, ready to obey his will and execute his vengance. They may alſo appear in fiery forms agreeable to their nature, as well as to his power, "who maketh his angels ſpirits and his miniſters a flame of fire,"—Heb. 1. 7. Theſe illuſtrious attendants were the harbingers of his incarnation, of his infancy, of his agony in the garden, and of his reſurrection and aſcenſion; but now their buſineſs is prodigiouſly grand, infinitely important, for they ſhall "gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other,"—Matt. 24. 31, and all nations before Chriſt the Judge, and eſpecially they ſhall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and ſhall caſt them into a furnace of fire,—Matt. 13. 41, the ſight of whom cannot but ſtrike terror into the ſouls of his enemies, when they are brought before his tribunal, and, tho' now they boaſt of their courage and glory in their ſhame, ſhall in tormenting horror and deſpair cry out—"is there any number of his mighty armies!" But this manifeſtation of the great judge will be exceedingly aggrandized by another awful attendant, that of fire; a lively emblem of the wrath of God,

God, and frequently in ſcripture uſed as an executioner of his vengeance againſt his enemies; "for a fire is kindled in mine anger, and ſhall "burn unto the loweſt hell,"—Deut. 32. 22, "a fire goeth before him and burneth up his "enemies round about,"—Ps. 97. 3; and referring to this awful day, St. Paul uſes this ſtrong expreſſion—"a certain fearful looking-for of "judgement and fiery indignation to conſume "the adverſaries,"—Heb. 10. 27.

It is not material to enquire whether this paſſage has regard to the general conflagration & to the coming of the day of God, "when the heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat,"—2. Pet. 3. 12—or whether this fire be metaphorical, or material, yet, certainly it is to be conſidered as a manifeſtation of the fire of God's wrath, and an inſtrument of "the perdition of ungodly men." The imagery in Daniel's viſion is applicable to this day of terror to the wicked, and appears primarily to refer to it,—"I beheld till the "thrones were caſt down (perhaps pitched or "placed down), and the ancient of days did ſit, "whoſe garment was white as ſnow and hair of "his head like the pure wool; his throne was like "fiery flame & his wheels (of the throne) as burning fire; a fiery ſtream iſſued and came forth "from before him; thouſand thouſands miniſtered

"unto

"unto him, and ten thouſand times ten thouſand "ſtood before him,"—Dan 7. 9. 10. And he may exhibit himſelf to the whole world as he did to the beloved John, "clothed with a gar- "ment down to the foot, and girt about the "breaſt with a golden girdle, his head and his "hairs white, like wool, as white as ſnow, his "eyes as a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine "braſs, as if they burned in a furnace, his voice "as the ſound of many waters, and his counte- "nance as the ſun ſhining in his ſtrength: com- "ing with fire and with his chariots, like a whirl- "wind, to render his anger with fury and his "rebuke with flames of fire,—Rev. 1. 13.—Iſa. 66. 15. "from whoſe face the earth and the "heaven fled away and there was no place for "them,"—Rev. 20. 11.—Aſtoniſhing! What a magnificient tremendous image!—the ſtable earth "reels to and fro like a drunkard, and is re- "moved like a cottage!" the heavens cannot bear the majeſty and terror of the look of this auguſt judge; they all flee away affrighted and ſeek a ſhelter—but none is found! Now then collect theſe ideas, bring up to your imagination, for you are very ſhortly to be real ſpectators of this grand and ſurpriſing ſcene—to be preſent at this ſublime—this awful morning, the revelation of the ſon of God,—behold him in the clouds of heaven, not alone, as in his ſtate of humiliation,

but

but with an innumerable company of angels to increaſe the majeſty of his appearance, and the pomp and ſplendor of that glorious day;—not in the blackneſs of darkneſs—nor by the light of the moon and twinkling ſtars, or brighter ſun, but "in fire, in flaming fire;" not in a clear and temperate ſky, but a "mighty tempeſt ſhall be "ſtirred up round about,—not with the ſtill ſmall "voice, but with loud thunderings and earth-"quakes—with the voice of the archangel and "the trump of God;"—ſuch is the judge who is to appear and ſuch the manner of his appearance! Now pauſe a moment!———— Draw the contraſt! Is this the helpleſs babe of Bethlehem—the weeping infant depoſited in a manger? Is this the child hurried into Egypt from the rage of murdering Herod?—"Is this the carpenter's ſon," the deſpiſed Galilean; the tempted, the perſecuted Jeſus; the meek and lowly one riding on an aſs?—Is this he that agonized in the garden, ſweating, "as it were great drops of blood?"—Is this the betrayed—the arreſted—the denied and forſaken Nazarene?—Can this be he who was arraigned, buffetted, ſpit upon, crowned with thorns, condemned, and nailed to a croſs—groaning, bleeding, agonizing, and in the pangs of death and dereliction, crying out "my God! my God! why haſt thou forſaken "me?"—Is this he whoſe mangled, breathleſs

corpſe

corpſe was laid in Joſeph's tomb?—Yes,—it is he, the very ſame Jeſus of Nazareth; but oh! how changed, how glorioufly exalted.—Now then let his enemies appear, and ſhew their malice; now, Pilate, condemn the uſurper; now then ye Jews "crucify him, crucify him;" now ye deiſts and infidels diſpute his divinity and the truth of his religion if you can;—now, ye hypocritical chriſtians, waſhed to fouler ſtains, impoſe upon him with your empty pretences; now deſpiſe his grace, laugh at his threatenings, and make light of his diſpleaſure:—Ah! now their courage fails; their levity looks ſerious;—now "terrors ſurround them like armed men, their "hands wax feeble;" anguiſh ſeizes them and pangs as of a woman in travail;—now they invoke the falling rocks, and deſire to go into "the clefts of the ragged rocks."—But why this ſolemnity and awe, this timidity and conſternation? Wherefore all theſe fearful ſhrieks, and heart-rending cries? The univerſal judge "ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth; the great day of his wrath is come,"—"the Lord Jeſus is revealed from heaven in flaming fire."

3. And the end of his being thus revealed from heaven "is to take vengeance on them that know "not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt."—Vengeance when attributed to God is far from implying a malignant, revengeful

revengeful delight in the misery of his creatures; but is the righteous judgement of God in inflicting just punishment on incorrigible rebels in the eternal world.—"For if God be unrighteous who "taketh vengeance, how then shall he judge the "world in righteousness?"—Rom. 3. 5, 6, according to his own declaration and appointment. —Isa. 11. 4. compared with Acts, 17. 31. "It is therefore a proof of the infinite holiness of his nature, and his infinite detestation of sin, to punish which he claims vengeance as his sole prerogative,"—Rom. 12. 19.—This great day is the "day of vengeance, that is in his heart,"—Isa. 63. 4.—"The day of the Lord of hosts, in "which he shall avenge him of his adversaries; "when he shall rise up as in mount Perizzim, "when he shall be wroth as in the valley of "Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange "work, and bring to pass his act, his strange "act, even the consumption that is determined," —Isa. 28. 21. The nature of this vengeance remains afterwards to be considered.—But

4. The objects of it are, 1st, "those that know not God"—ignorance therefore will be no plea for mercy at that day:—In this class are to be reckoned all such as have died in heathenish darkness, stupidly and wilfully ignorant of the Supreme Being and his perfections, and even tho' they may not have heard of the Gospel of Jesus; tho' it seems probable, most modern nations have heard

heard of the Goſpel, tho' many would not receive it; however, all nations originally had notices and ſome knowledge of the true God,—Noah's ſons had a peculiar advantage in this reſpect. At the confuſion of language, and conſequent diſperſion, doubtleſs men carried with them much true traditionary knowledge of the Supreme Being, which they ſoon corrupted and finally loſt: God was therefore under no obligation to make a ſecond revelation of himſelf,—thoſe "who know not God," remain wilfully ignorant of him; for they have before them the works of creation and providence; they have every where around, proofs of the Supreme Being, and of his excellency; they are preſerved by him, and are every moment crowned with his goodneſs; and yet they will not ſee the amiableneſs of that love to which they owe every enjoyment, yet they will not look up to the bountiful hand that maintains them in being—beſides their conſcience is their monitor, by which they might have attained to the knowledge of moral good and evil, "their thoughts in "the mean while accuſing, or elſe excuſing one "another,"—Rom. 2. 15.—"So that they are "without excuſe, becauſe that when they knew "(ſomething of) God and his perfections, by his "works and in their conſciences, they glorified "him not as God, but changed the truth of "God

"God into a lie, and worſhipped and ſerved the "creature more than the creator,"—Rom. 1.—But if the wrath of God will be revealed from heaven againſt theſe, and will leave their ſins againſt their ſmall remains of light, inexcuſable,—what ſhall we ſay of thoſe who live in chriſtian countries, in the midſt of Goſpel light and privileges, and call themſelves chriſtians, and yet "know not God?"—It is to be feared theſe compoſe the bulk of mankind: In every city, town and village, even in this kingdom; how few!—how very few are there, who know God in a ſpiritual ſenſe!—the generality, it is true, profeſs to "know him in words; but in works they deny him;"—they are ignorant of the true character of their Maker,—they repreſent him to themſelves as a God all mercy—who will have compaſſion on their infirmities, and will not "be extreme to mark what is done amiſs," but they are unconcerned about and ignorant of his infinite holineſs and deteſtation of ſin—of his unſpotted purity and impartial juſtice; theſe they take not into the account, thus they make God "altogether ſuch an one as themſelves"—they are alſo habitually ignorant of themſelves—they know not their ſtate by nature; but are puffed up with a vain conceit of inherent goodneſs—they ſee not their actual tranſgreſſions, and are unacquainted with the deceitfulneſs of their hearts; hence they think

their

their ſtate is good; hence they do not like to retain God in their thoughts; "therefore they ſay unto God, depart from us, for we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways;—what is the Almighty, that we ſhould ſerve him, and what profit ſhould we have if we pray unto him?"—Job, 21. 14, 15. This is the caſe with the many at this day; tho' this their ignorance of God and themſelves is in a great degree to be attributed to thoſe who have the care of their ſouls' concerns, but who are habitually careleſs of them—to us, who call ourſelves guides of the blind, but who are blind ourſelves—to us, confident "that we are lights of them which are "in darkneſs, but who ourſelves darken counſel "by words without knowledge,"—Job, 38. 2. Such is the woeful ignorance of the generality, which notwithſtanding will be inexcuſable,—for they have the ſcriptures in their hands, but will not ſearch them; they have very many opportunities of coming to the knowledge of the truth, but they neglect and deſpiſe them all; they love their "ſmooth things, to hear deceits prophecied"—they hate the light, and therefore "will "not come to it, leſt their deeds ſhould be re-"ported," but they hold faſt their ignorance and blindneſs with wilful obſtinacy—irreligion alſo in general is a not knowing God.—To be more particular, let us, 2dly, extend our enquiry amongſt thoſe who know not God and obey not the

Goſple

Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and we ſhall find that at the revelation "of the wrath of God "againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs "of men," thoſe who have had the light of evangelical truth ſhining around them, and who obey it not, will receive a puniſhment infinitely more tremendous than they who never heard the Goſpel truths opened and explained.—"It "will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomor-"rah in the day of judgement than for theſe." Jeſus Chriſt is the author of this Goſpel—he was a preacher of it, and is the ſum and ſubſtance of it; it is good news, glad tidings of the Grace of God to a loſt and periſhing world—it announces peace, pardon, righteouſneſs, eternal life and ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and is ſaid to be obeyed when it is received and embraced by faith with and from the heart, and confeſſion is made of it with the mouth, and the ordinances of it are ſubmitted to: "if thou ſhalt confeſs with "thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in "thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from "the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved,"—Rom. 10. 9. "For with the heart man believeth unto righte-"ouſneſs, and with the mouth confeſſion is "made unto ſalvation,"—v. 10. All who hear the Goſpel do not believe it, and therefore do not obey it; many believe it and reject the ordinances of it, and others who profeſs it do not yield a cordial and cheerful obedience to it, and

both

both may be reckoned among the diſobeyers of it—Deiſts, carnal profeſſors, profane deſpiſers and mere moral, unconverted perſons are to be included, whoſe condemnation will be aggravated by the external light which has ſhone around them, and more eſpecially if they have lived in any place where the pure, unadulterated Goſpel has been preached, "to obey the Goſpel of our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt," appears to imply 1. a belief of the doctrines contained in the Goſpel, ſo as to embrace them—and is attended with an humiliating conviction of our originally-depraved condition in our firſt parent—the knowledge of ourſelves as unholy and ungodly creatures by habit; and a perſuaſion of our diſinclination, & moral inability to perform any action, or think a thought good in itſelf or acceptable to God; a conviction of this by the powerful operation of the ſpirit of God, leading the ſoul to Jeſus, entirely humbled, and feeling that it lies at mercy, as being ſo wretched and guilty as to deſerve nothing but eternal death: at the ſame time embracing him, as the only living "way, "the truth and the life," and deſiring no other method of ſalvation, and building our hopes of eternal life on no other foundation. This is one ſenſe of obeying the Goſpel; cloſely connected with this, is 2. a life of holineſs, conſiſting in an earneſt habitual concern for and endeavor after a growth, "in grace and in the knowledge

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of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt,"—in promoting as much as in one lies the glory and honor of the Redeemer's kingdom here below—and in an exemplification of all the chriſtian virtues in the life, conduct and converſation in the world; ſuch is the ſhort epitome of Goſpel-obedience, by which we may ſee it is oppoſite, i. e. what it is not "to obey the Goſpel of our "Lord Jeſus Chriſt."—It is to entertain ſuch an opinion of human nature and human power as to ſee no other neceſſity for a Saviour than to make up our deficiencies; and of courſe to ſet aſide as needleſs the operation or influence of the ſpirit to produce conviction "of ſin, of righte-"ouſneſs and judgement." It is to live in a careleſs neglect of eternal things—to prefer the world, a mere trifle, our eaſe, character, poſſeſſions and enjoyments, before the living God—the Saviour, eternal happineſs. It is to be unwilling to make an entire reſignation of every plea of merit; to be deſirous of retaining ſome pleaſure, or ſome convenient, ſecret thing, that cleaveth cloſe to us,—Luke, 14. 26, 27, 33.—Matt. 5. 29.—In ſhort not "to obey the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt," is to refuſe "him "who ſpeaketh from heaven;" to neglect to embrace that excellent ſalvation which Chriſt freely offers—"without money and without price," to prefer their luſts to his love—and to be averſe from devoting ſoul and body—will & affections,

and

and all we have and are to his excluſive ſervice, as being our infinitely binding duty and higheſt privilege: the language & temper of an obedient ſubject and ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt is "oh! Lord, our God, other Lords beſides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name, they are dead, they ſhall not live, they are deceaſed, they ſhall not riſe," —Iſa. 26. 13, 14.—"What have I to do any more with idols?"—Hoſ. 14. 8.—Thy face, Lord, will I ſeek,—Ps. 27. 8.—For the deſire of my ſoul is to thy name and to the remembrance of thee,—Iſa. 26. 8. And again,—

"Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon earth I deſire beſides thee?" —Ps. 73. 25. Since thou art "all my ſalvation and all my deſire,"—2. Sam. 23. 5.—"Oh! that my ways were directed to keep thy ſtatutes, for the law of thy mouth is better to me than thouſands of gold and ſilver,"—Ps. 119. 5, 72. "Thou knoweſt that I love thee,"—John, 21. 17. Therefore as obedient children, doing the will of God from the heart, let us be "holy in all manner of converſation,"—1. Pet. 1. "Ye that love the Lord hate evil,"—P. 97. 10.—The direct reverſe of this is the temper and conduct of him who obeys not the Goſpel; he is an enemy to God and his government, to Jeſus and his ſalvation,

ſalvation, his ways and his people; and therefore at the great day of retribution will be treated accordingly:—"Thoſe mine enemies which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring hither and ſlay them before me,"—Luke, 19. 27.

5. And the nature of the vengeance to be taken on them that obey not this Goſpel, we have revealed to us in the following verſe, "who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord and from the glory of his power,"—v. 9. and here every word is big with terrors to the diſobedient—it is an infinitely affecting and high-wrought deſcription of the torments of the wicked.

1. Deſtruction—as the moſt valuable bleſſings and higheſt pleaſures are elegantly expreſſed under the notion of life, where it is ſaid, "men ſhould be abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of God's houſe;" this is brought in proof of it—"for with thee is the fountain of life,"—Ps. 36. 9. ſo in like manner the fulneſs of miſery, which is the portion of them that forget God, or that know him not, neither obey the Goſpel, is held forth by "death and deſtruction," not annihilation, for that would be a deſirable privilege, but by a deſtruction and loſs of all that is valuable, all that can tend to any deſirable purpoſe, all the ſweets of being—their

bodies

bodies ſhall be fitted for puniſhment—their eyes ſhall behold the terror of their priſon and the doleful appearance of each other; their ears ſhall be grated with the groans and howlings of infernal tortures; their ſenſe of feeling ſhall be exquiſite, and all to ſerve to heighten their pain —while every thought and every reflection ſhall be loaded with the horrid remembrance of what is paſt, and with anticipating the future.

2. This vengeance is immenſe in its duration, "everlaſting deſtruction;" this thing is frequently expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt terms in other places of ſcripture.—Mark, 9. 44—it is ſaid that "in hell the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,"—Iſa. 66. 24; how dreadful a view does this afford us of the wages of ſin! a man's ſpirit may bear up under heavy preſſures; but theſe enemies of God, inſtead of having the ſmalleſt glimpſe of comfort and hope, muſt by an infallible aſſurance of everlaſting deſtruction, be filled with the moſt exquiſite tortures, and by alſo having in lively proſpect that their pains ſhall endure for evermore.—Amazing! diſtracting thought! oh! boundleſs duration! as long as the eternal God ſhall live to diſtribute, ſo long will the ſinner continue to feel the torments! Would we but ſeriouſly look at this dreadful proſpect, how would theſe diſguiſed nothings

nothings upon which we so fondly doat, disappear; how little should we be allured to make this eternal God, our eternal enemy!—What infinite madness to buy momentary satisfaction at the expence of everlasting destruction!

3. This destruction is "from the presence of the Lord," the only fountain of life and light, whose favor is the highest good; as soon as the Lord appears they shall perish at his presence like "wax before the fire;" it denotes the punishment of loss, "depart from me, ye cursed," —or as his presence in heaven is the source of that "fulness of joy and of those rivers of pleasures which flow there;" so his omnipresence in hell will scatter torment and wrath every where—he will there be an enraged enemy and a consuming fire.

4. It is also "from the glory of his power;" "he will be the immediate author of these torments;" with his own right hand, and with his furious arm "will he afflict their souls, and will illustriously manifest the glory of that power by which he will dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel;" he will make known his power in the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,"—Rom. 9. 22;—and he will be animated to make them more and more miserable that his power in proportion may become the more illustrious: Dreadful state of impenitent sinners!

ADDRESS,

ADDRESS.

The text has now been conſidered in the whole connection of it as a diſplay of the juſt vengeance of God upon thoſe who "know him not, and who obey not the Goſpel," in the eternal world.—Permit me therefore now moſt ſeriouſly to addreſs you, the inhabitants of this place, with a ſhort recapitulation of what you have heard for a long ſeaſon:—The Goſpel has been continued with you near 30 years—you have heard it explained in all points, and in language level to the meaneſt capacity—you have been taught to regard morality; or mere moral preaching as pernicious, dangerous, as tending to lull the conſcience into the moſt fatal ſecurity and to harden the heart by blinding the minds of "them which believe not."—Remember this then; you, moſt of you, if you have paid any degree of attention to Mr. Bowman's diſcourſes and converſation, muſt, I think, know the Goſpel in the letter of it.—You have been led to regard man's boaſted goodneſs of heart as having its origin in pride, and therefore ideal, imaginary: you have been taught to conſider man's boaſted pretended righteouſneſs as the

mere offspring of degenerate nature; a self-created phantom; therefore detestable to an holy God—you have been shewn the way of acceptance with God; even thro' Jesus "the way, the truth of the life,"—John, 14. 6. and to look to him as the author and finisher of faith,—Heb. 12. 2. as the bringer in of an everlasting and perfect righteousness for his children; and that no man can come to the father but by him,—John, 14. 6, and except the father who hath sent him, draw him,—John, 6. 44, the necessity of the agency and influence of the holy spirit to produce conviction of sin in the soul; repentance and justifying faith has been urged in direct opposition to all moral persuasion & human power; and that his people shall be willing in the day of his power,—Ps. 110. 3. And that salvation begun and completed in heaven is the free gift of God thro' Jesus Christ, without any thing on our part to merit it, "without money and without price."

"That the gifts and callings of God are without repentance;" freely and sovereignly bestowed upon, and graciously dispensed to the, undeserving, and that God imputeth righteousness without works,—Rom. 4. 6, you've frequently been informed. In opposition to all Antinomian licentiousness, your pastor, with a wise and understanding heart, has enforced

upon

upon you the abſolute, unavoidable conſequence and effects of genuine faith; that it will not "hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs, nor have "pleaſure therein,"—2. Theſ. 2. 12. but that it yieldeth "the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs" in the life and converſation,—Heb. 12. 11.—Whatever handle may have been made of the doctrine of juſtification by faith in the merits of Chriſt, and of effectual calling by ſome of you, as leading "to ſin that grace may abound," you have not been ſo taught; but on the contrary, in this point have had "line upon line, line upon "line; precept upon precept, precept upon pre-"cept;" that God has not called us to unclean-neſs, but to holineſs,—1 Theſ. 4. 7. Rom. 8. 30, according as he hath choſen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy and without blame before him in love; being predeſtinated—that we ſhould be to the praiſe of his glory,—Eph. 1. 4, 10, 11; ſo that you have been taught to "walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleaſing,"—Col. 1. 10. worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called,—Eph. 4. 4. and thro' the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue, and to adorn your "holy profeſſion, by giving all diligence to add to "your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and "to knowledge temperance, and to temperance "patience, and to patience godlineſs, and to god-

"lineſs

" lineſsbrotherly kindneſs, and to brotherly kind-
" neſs charity, or love,—2. Pet. 1. 5, 6, 7."

Theſe ſublime truths have been repeatedly enforced, therefore you cannot plead ignorance of the way of ſalvation; you cannot extenuate your guilt by ſaying at the great, approaching day, " Lord pity me," my ſhepherd has deceived me; he told " me all ſhould be well, tho' I " walked in the imagination of my heart; you " cannot complain he cried peace! peace! " God is merciful! fear not, no harm ſhall hap-" pen unto thee!—no; far from it,—he is clear " of your blood:" Every plea ſhall then be huſhed into confuſion; conſcience will be your moſt inveterate accuſer; guilt will ſtrike terror thro' the ſtouteſt heart; you will be aſked, how have you improved theſe golden moments of Goſpel times? theſe halcyon days, theſe acceptable years; years crowned with the joyful tidings of ſalvation, of peace and good will towards men? What intelligence has your paſtor to carry to the eternal world reſpecting the ſucceſs of his miniſtry? " What anſwer ſhall he return to him that ſent him?" Some of you, bleſſed be his holy name, have " heard the word of God and do it;" you are wiſe unto ſalvation thro' faith which is in " Chriſt Jeſus;" fruitful in good works, and increaſing, we truſt, in the " knowledge of God to the praiſe of the glory of his grace," yet as a

cottage

"cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of "cucumbers,—Isa. 1.8, as the shaking of an olive "tree and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage "is done,"—Isai. 24. 13. The greater part of you then can give no favorable answer to the above questions? Silent as yonder breathless corpse! What, no tidings but of rebellion and rejection of the gospel carried to the eternal world, by the herald who was sent with the message of reconciliation? Remember, the awful day is at hand, when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, when the judgement shall be set; the books be opened! and when the irreversible sentence "depart ye curled" shall be pronounced,—then the blackness of darkness! the never dying worm of conscience! the unalterable groan! the chains of everlasting anguish!!! There fellow commoners in iniquity; companions in profaneness, persecutors of the ways of God; despisers of those that are good; the unbelieving, the abominable and the liar, the neatly trimmed Pharisee & self-righteous Deist, are all abashed and confounded, all in one promiscuous ruin!

Before the door of mercy be for ever shut; before he swears in "his wrath you shall not enenter into his rest;" consider this, ye that forget God, throw away the arms of your rebellion, fall

fall proſtrate before his footſtool; "kiſs the ſon leſt he be angry and ye periſh,"—Ps. 2. 12. let, oh! let "the time paſt ſuffice you to have wrought the will of the Gentiles," and to have lived in a ſtate of alienation from and rebellion againſt God; and of oppoſition to Jeſus the the friend of ſinners; "who hath hardened "himſelf againſt God and hath proſpered?"—Job. 9. 4. "Haſt thou an arm like God, or can'ſt "thou thunder with a voice like him?"—Job. 40. 9. You that have forſaken "the aſſembling of yourſelves together," that mock at the ſabbaths of the Lord, deſpiſe his ways and perſecute his people, conſider what you are doing; you are not fighting againſt man, but God, againſt him who was once revealed from heaven with "peace and good-will towards men," with a "why will ye die?"—Jerem. 27. 13. You are making your only friend your eternally implacable enemy, you ſee not your danger; the wrath of God hangs over you, and though, in mercy, the ſuſpended judgement delays a moment; it will ſurely overtake you in the eternal world, "the ſharp arrows of the mighty with coals of juniper,"—Ps. 120. 4. then all your hard thoughts of God, all your innumerable provocations, and ſins againſt light, knowledge and convictions will appear againſt you in terrible array; and who, think you, will be your accuſer?

not

not only your companions in wickedneſs, and thoſe whom your example has ruined, and your own conſciences, but he who has ſo often ſtood before you, as an "Ambaſſador for Chriſt; who "has ſo often ſtretched out his hands in vain "and ſpent his ſtrength for nought in beſeeching "you to be reconciled to God"—then all his diſcourſes, his warnings and entreaties, his private admonitions, his prayers, and his writings will riſe up in your remembrance in judgement againſt you, and condemn you; all which you have deſpiſed; "you would none of his reproof; "therefore God will laugh at your calamity; he "will mock when your fear cometh, when your "fear cometh as deſolation, and your deſtruc- "tion cometh as a whirlwind, when diſtreſs and "anguiſh cometh upon you; then ſhall they "call upon me, but I will not anſwer, they ſhall "ſeek me, but they ſhall not find me; therefore "ſhall they eat of the fruit of their own way, "& be filled with their own devices,"—Prov. 1.

Go now to his grave, ye thoughtleſs and profane, ye decent, unconverted formaliſts; young or old, blooming in health or pining with diſeaſe; there read your future deſtiny,—ſo ſhall your countenance grow pale; your eyes ſhall be gloomy orbs rolling in death—ſo ſhall your lungs ceaſe to heave and your pulſe to beat for ever;

ever: and when you have nearly forgot there ever exiſted ſuch a man as Thomas Bowman, when the remembrance of theſe great truths, when the impreſſion they may have made, is obliterated by ſin, by love of the world or by a perverted Goſpel; then approach his tomb and read the deciſive ſentence, with which he finiſhed his miniſterial courſe: "the Lord Jeſus ſhall "be revealed from heaven with his mighty "angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on "them that know not God and that obey not "the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt."—And though it be there engraved only in periſhing marble; yet know, for a ſurety, it is the unalterable determination of the MOST HIGH, is written in the records of eternity; engraved as in eternal braſs with a pen of iron and with the point of diamond."

Commiſſioned by your dying ſhepherd, I will now call on you who have heard the Goſpel, underſtand it, are convinced of it's truth and importance, have been much affected under it, who promiſe when you ſhall have convenient ſeaſon (which according to God's uſual dealings is not likely to arrive), you will attend to theſe things, but whom the dread of ſingularity and perſecution, whom fears of the loſs of reputation and of friends cauſe to ſtand aloof,—"in whom alſo the cares of this world, "or the deceitfulneſs of riches choke the word

"and

" and it becometh unfruitful,"—Matt. 13. 22; reflect, that loſt opportunities can never be recalled; you have had convictions but have ſmothered them; warnings from conſcience and the public word, but have ſlighted them; the emotions of the Holy Spirit you have ſuppreſſed; you are in an unconverted ſtate and may never be in any other; oh! that you may not be given over to a reprobate mind, and ſeared conſcience; for this is the common caſe of moſt who have heard the Goſpel for a great length of time and are not the ſubjects of a ſaving change—your judgements are informed, you have ſome light, knowledge, and the form of godlineſs; can you reſt eaſy without the power? ſurely you cannot, if you are convinced of the reality of eternal things, that God is to be preferred to Mammon, Chriſt to Belial, heaven to hell,—it cannot be; theſe doctrines, theſe glorious truths are now freſh in your memories, e'er long they will be forgotten, or may give place to the commandments and traditions of men; mere morality may uſurp the place of evangelical truth and maintain its ground in Martham; nay, the Goſpel ordinances may reſt with the cold corpſe in yonder grave; the true ſpirit of prophecy may ceaſe with the breath of Mr. Bowman's noſtrils; may theſe conſiderations, with that of the account which you muſt give at the ſupreme tribunal,

bimal, rouſe you from your lethargy; may they excite you to one determined, one vigorous, perſevering effort for your ſoul's ſalvation; remember the night of ignorance and unbelief is far ſpent—the day of taking vengeance for it is at hand; "wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind,"—1. Pet. 1. 13. The end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore ſober "and watch unto prayer,"—1. Pet. 4. 3, "watching there-"unto with all perſeverance,"—Eph. 6. 18, and "rend your hearts and not your garments, and "turn unto the Lord your God, for he is graci-"ous and merciful, ſlow to anger and of great "kindneſs, and repenteth him of the evil, who "knoweth, if he will return and repent, and "leave a bleſſing behind him,"—Joel. 2.

I will now call upon you, who diſcover nothing improper or immoral in your conduct, but on the contrary, in appearance, love the truth, hear it with attention, ſeldom neglecting any opportunities; who, notwithſtanding, give no good evidences of the ſafety of your ſtate; tho' you can converſe freely on religious ſubjects, and ſeem to take a delight in the ſociety of the godly—my dear Sirs, do not deceive yourſelves; it is a very eaſy matter to talk of religion, to have the Shibboleth of our party on our tongues, and the language of Canaan on our lips; in ſhort, the head may be filled with knowledge, and yet the heart

remain

remain deſtitute of grace,—"we may have a "form of knowledge and of the truth in the "law,"—Rom. 2. 20; we may abound in utterance and knowledge, "may underſtand all myſteries and all knowledge" in divinity, and be able to defend a controverted point with acuteneſs, and like Apollos be mighty in the ſcriptures, and yet fall ſhort of true knowledge, of an experimental acquaintance with God, ourſelves, Jeſus Chriſt and him crucified, and therefore can have "no part in the ſalvation of God;" alas! like Agrippa, almoſt, but not altogether perſuaded to be Chriſtians; "for not every one "that ſaith unto me, Lord! Lord! ſhall enter "into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth "the will of my father, which is in heaven,"—Matt. 7. 21. Nothing ſhort of faith in Chriſt, and a ſupreme love to God and Chriſt, wrought in the heart by the renewing and ſanctifying influence of the ſpirit, leading the mind to high and heavenly things, can poſſibly ſecure us from the charge of diſobedience at the laſt day. You will do well, therefore, to ſet immediately about examining your ſtate, and that not lightly, and after the manner of diſſemblers with God; call to mind the many evidences of converſion and ſaving faith, which you have repeatedly heard, and ſee if you poſſeſs them; and if you fear you are not paſſed from death to life, I beſeech

you

you, as you value your own ſouls, never reſt eaſy another day, till you ſeek the kingdom of God & his righteouſneſs, nor delay till you have a good hope through faith, that "your Redeemer is your's & you are his"—for time, the ſtream of time, is in motion, in ſwift, inceſſant motion, we are ſailing on its ſurface, & ſhall ſoon be launched into the ſhoreleſs ocean of eternity; and if in the leaky veſſel of our own righteouſneſs, ſhall be abſorbed and loſt for ever!—If you have been building your hopes of ſalvation on the ſandy foundation of your works and merit, and not on the rock Chriſt Jeſus, you and your towering Babel will fall before the great hailſtones of the wrath of God; "they ſhall ſweep away every refuge of "lies, and the waters ſhall overflow the hiding "place,—Iſai. 28. 17. "Ariſe then, eſcape for "thy life, look not behind thee, neither tarry, leſt "thou be conſumed,"—Gen. 19. 17.

To you who love our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity, I will addreſs a few words:—The loſs you have experienced is great, inexpreſſibly great; "for as the conſolations of God are not ſmall with the Believer,"—Job. 15. 11. and he has meat to eat which the world knows not of,—John, 4. 32, and a peace which paſſeth all underſtanding,—Phil. 4. 7. ſo alſo his ſorrows are of a kind peculiar to himſelf; ſuch as the world would deſpiſe and ridicule; of many that might

be

be mentioned; a bereavement like the preſent is not the leaſt of the ſorrows of the chriſtian—religious friendſhips are of the moſt exquiſite kind—the reciprocity, or mutual interchange of affection between miniſter and people, the moſt exalted that can be conceived; there are inſtances of this in the New Teſtament,—read 1. Theſſ. 2. 8.—Gal. 4. 15.—2. Cor. 2. 4.—Acts, 20. 38.—He is their father, they the children; he the ſhepherd, they the ſheep; they are a little family here below, of which he is the viſible head. You therefore cannot but mourn in ſilent anguiſh for the loſs of this your father in Iſrael; your ſhepherd, and the head of your little community; and you may have to lament your being deprived of public ordinances and of the ſincere milk of the word, let others affirm what they pleaſe that the *Goſpel* (you would ſay *morality*) is preached in every place where Chriſtianity or the religion of the Bible is *profeſſed*,—hence alſo you loſe the benefit of his advice and conſolation in your ſpiritual concerns and difficulties; the advantage of his private prayers: for the good of your ſouls and growth in grace, while many of you are deprived of a *temporal* friend—you will call to mind the opportunities of attending his miniſtry, which you have neglected—of private converſation, that might have been improved to the nobleſt purpoſes—opportunities never

never to be recalled; the reflection will be profitable, though it will touch you to the heart it will, I truſt, be the means of your attending more ſtrictly to the more private means of grace, —prayer, meditation, the word & religious converſation—of looking leſs to men, the creature; more to God—to Jeſus, who is, "when creatures fail and die, an everliving friend," who has "promiſed himſelf to be your father, and that "you ſhall be his ſons and daughters,"—2. Cor. 6. 18. your ſhepherd; "therefore will I ſave my "flock, and they ſhall no more be a prey, and "I will judge between cattle and cattle; and I "will ſet up one ſhepherd and he ſhall feed "them, even my ſervant David (Jeſus Chriſt), "he ſhall feed them, and he ſhall be their ſhep-"herd,—Ezek. 34. 22. 23.—your head,—1. "Cor. 11. 3.—your guide, for he will guide "you into all truth,—John, 16. 13. into the "way of peace,—Luke, 1. 79. by the ſprings of "waters ſhall he guide them,—Iſa. 49. 10. the "Lord ſhall guide thee continually,—Iſa. 58. "11. and make thee to lie down in green paſ-"tures, and ſhall lead thee beſide the ſtill waters, —Ps. 28. 2." At the ſame time you will recollect the affectionate manner in which he beſought you "to receive not the grace of God in "vain, but to walk worthy of the vocation, "wherewith ye are called with all lowlineſs and "meekneſs, forbearing one another in love, en-

"deavoring

" deavoring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the " bond of peace,"—Eph. 4.—His guile with which he caught your ſouls in the Goſpel net—his zeal, his faithfulneſs and love both to God and yourſelves;—you will feel your loſs of this ſpiritual father, and will mourn afreſh when you remember the earneſtneſs with which you attended to the joyful ſound,—how you hung, as it were, upon his lips, while " they dropped " as an honey-comb,"—Cant. 4. 11. and diſtilled knowledge " as the dew, and as the ſmall rain " upon the tender herb,"—Deut. 32. 2. You will be in diſtreſs at having the public word withdrawn " being as ſheep that have no (un-" der) ſhepherd,—2 Chron. 18. 16.—but your chief ſhepherd takes the overſight of you, " will " gather the lambs in his arms, and gently lead " thoſe that are with young: you have experi-" enced his goodneſs to you in times paſt, for he " has loved you with an everlaſting love, there-" fore with loving has he drawn you,"—Jer. 31. 3.—with the bands of love and with the cords of a man,—Hoſ. 11. 4.—In his love and in his pity he has redeemed you,—Iſa. 63. 9.—Has not ſuffered ſin to " have the dominion " over you;" has delivered thee, and has ſaid, " I will be with him in trouble (in the time of " Jacob's trouble), and will deliver him,"—Ps. 91. 15.—" He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles, " yea

" yea in ſeven no evil ſhall touch thee;"—Can you not then truſt him?—" for there is no want " to them that fear him,"—Ps. 34. 9. " He will " never leave you nor forſake you," but you ſhall have freſh manifeſtations of his love to your ſouls, nearneſs to him in prayer, and faith that " all things ſhall work together for good to " you that love God,"—Rom. 8. 20.—and " to you who are troubled, reſt;" reſt from outward afflictions and viſitations in judgement,—and if any of the deſpiſers and perſecutors of the ways of God among you are cut off, you ſhall ſee your preſerver; " he ſhall cover thee with his " feathers, and under his wings ſhalt thou truſt; " his truth ſhall be thy ſhield and buckler,"—Ps. 91. 4. " And a man ſhall be as an hiding " place from the wind and a covert from the " tempeſt, as rivers of water in a dry place, as " a ſhadow of a great rock in a weary land,"—Iſa. 32. 2. May theſe bleſſed promiſes be your conſolation " and ſong in this houſe of your " pilgrimage;" may they encourage you " to " go on your way rejoicing;" may the ſpiritual preſence of the glorified Jeſus animate you in your progreſs Zion-ward to run the way of his commandments with delight, to preſs forward thro' an hoſt of oppoſing foes from within and from without, " towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus," and " to glorify him with your bodies and ſpirits,

which

which are his," for as he who hath called you is holy, ſo ſhould ye alſo "be holy in all manner "of converſation;" knowing that with our brother, who is juſt gone before, "we muſt "ſhortly put off this our tabernacle," and in the near proſpect of death and eternity, may your compoſure, reſignation and faith equal his; for tho' the deſire of farther uſefulneſs, and an uncommon attachment to his "dear people," as he called you, might for a moment "leave "him in a ſtrait betwixt two, knowing that to "abide in the fleſh was more needful for you," yet his habitual deſire was to depart and be with Chriſt. "I am going to him, I ſhall ſoon be "with him," ſaid he, riſing from his bed with the moſt perfect compoſure, "and may you "who come after me ſerve him much better "than I have done." It was an affecting, a pleaſingly-awful ſcene to behold, as I did, an aged, faithful ſervant of Jeſus, under the preſſure of the iron hand of death, addreſſing thoſe around him in ſtrains of the moſt exalted piety, and in the view of himſelf as an unworthy ſervant, the chief of ſinners, aſcribing his ſalvation to the free, ſovereign grace of God thro' Jeſus Chriſt,—and reſting all his hopes upon, and deriving ſtrong conſolation from, "the two "immutable things in which it was impoſſible "for God to lie,"—Heb. 6. 18. Was not this to live the life? Is not this to die the death of

the

the righteous?—and yet fools, who make a mock at ſin, call this affected humility, a "*being righteous overmuch*," a life of madneſs and an end without honor. Let thoſe then "who ſpeak ſmooth things, who prophecy de-"ceits, and the people who love to have it ſo," take their downy pillows of good works, ſelf-wrought merit, native virtue and the like, and lay them on the dying bed—Can it be a bed of eaſe? No, of deluſion, of torture, nay the rack when compared to this man's, who, in the pains of death, without a murmur or repining thought, looked up to "God and prayed for "reſolution to bear his afflicting hand," who died truſting in Jeſus, "the author and finiſher of "his faith." This is happineſs, this is a fore taſte of the heavenly world!—he could ſay with the apoſtle, "he had fought the good fight, had finiſhed his courſe and had kept the faith,"—2 Tim. 4. 7,—For he was in the hand of God made extremely uſeful in calling home many ſouls by converſion; you, the believers in this place, and many others elſewhere, acknowledge him as a ſpiritual father. The inhabitants of Cawſton and its environs (many of them) have abundant reaſon to rejoice that ever he was ſent among them, and doubtleſs it was a weeping day with them, when, after the preaching to them the goſpel of God freely for twenty-five years, he was conſtrained to tell them "they

"ſhould

" ſhould ſee his face no more," as their paſtor. You all loved this man of God, and can I not " bear you record, that if it had been poſſible " ſome of you would have plucked out your " own eyes & have given them," that if conſiſtent with the divine will he might have been ſpared for your ſakes? But he is juſt gone before and has left you to mourn for a time the waning ordinances and departed glory! you ſhall ſhortly follow and enter into that reſt of which he is now in the full enjoyment. In the mean time, " therefore, dearly beloved, the joy and crown " of him who once labored among you, ſtand " faſt in the Lord, my dearly beloved." Remember you have many enemies, and all will unite againſt you; the world, the enemies of religion around you, will mock and deride; they will attempt to allure you to deny, like Peter, your Lord; they will rejoice at your downfal, your backſlidings, your lukewarmneſs and diviſions, with a " there! there! ſo would we have " it;" and you are to expect they will perſecute you in ſome form or other, " for all that " will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus ſhall ſuffer per- " ſecution,"—2 Tim. 3. 12. Satan will roar as tho' he were ready to devour, or by lying ſuggeſtions will inſinuate God hath forſaken you by taking away your " maſter from your " head;" he will aſk you, " What is the Al- " mighty that you ſhould ſerve him, and what

" profit

"profit ſhould you have if you pray unto him?"
—Job 21. 15.—hence, by degrees, he will plead a little relaxation from the duties of ſecret prayer and reading of the word, &c.—he will attempt to foment jealouſy, ſhyneſs and diviſions among you; "but ye need not, brethren, that any man teach you, for ye are not ignorant of his devices,"—2 Cor. 2. 11. But your greateſt and moſt formidable enemy is "a deceitful and a "deſperately wicked heart;" ſuffice it to ſay of it, the farther you advance in your chriſtian walk and warfare the more diſcoveries will be made to you of its inherent and contracted baſeneſs; as Ezekiel, the farther he advanced into the chambers of imagery, the more and greater he ſaw were the abominations of the ancients of the houſe of Iſrael,—Ezek. 8. Lead us, oh! Lord, by thy ſpirit into the indiſpenſible knowledge of ourſelves and of thee, then ſhall we earneſtly deſire "the blood of ſprink-"ling that ſpeaketh better things than that of "Abel, that precious blood of Chriſt that "cleanſeth from all ſin;"—"that, clothed with "the garments of ſalvation and with the white "robe of the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, we may "be thine in the day when thou makeſt up thy "jewels,—Malac. 3. 17.

I cannot diſmiſs you without obſerving, that the preſent criſis calls you to a cloſe walk with God, in a ſtrict regular and conſcientious attend-

ance

on the means appointed for the quickening your ſouls; I allude not only to private duties, but to unanimity as chriſtians, as children, adopted children of him "of whom the whole "family in heaven and earth is named," and particularly to your joining yourſelves together in chriſtian fellowſhip, aſſociating as often as may be convenient, at times not interfering with the eſtabliſhed worſhip in your pariſh, for the purpoſe of waiting upon God in prayer, and "pouring out your hearts before him" as a bereaved little community, reading his word, or ſome evangelical writings, and relating to each other the preſent ſtate of your minds: you have the command, the approbation and the promiſed bleſſing and preſence of the prayer, hearing God for your encouragement,—See Matt. 18. 20.—1 Cor. 5. 4.—Exod. 20. 24.—Zech. 2. 5.—Rev. 21. 3.—Mal. 3. 16.—Heb. 3. 1.—Ps. 66. 16.—Ps. 18.—Ps. 116.—and divers other paſſages. Thus you will be leſs ſenſible of your loſs; thus your love to God and to each other will be increaſed; "thus your "faith will grow exceedingly," for by it you are even now "come unto mount Zion, and "unto the city of the living God, the heavenly "Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable company "of angels, to the general aſſembly and church "of

" of the firſt-born which are written in heaven,
" and to God, the judge of all, and to the
" ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and to Jeſus,
" the mediator of the new covenant, and to the
" blood of ſprinkling that ſpeaketh better things
" than that of Abel,"—Heb. 12. 21—4. Take eſpecial heed therefore, watch and pray, and cautiouſly beware, leſt thro' temptation, worldly mindedneſs and unbelief, you loſe ſight of your " reſpect to the recompence of reward," and particularly " let every man wherein he is " called therein abide with God,"—1 Cor. 7. 24. on which ſubject I cannot ſay more than Mr. Bowman has ſaid to his late people at Cawſton, whoſe faith and example I beſeech you moſt carefully to follow, and you will meet with the ſame ſucceſs—will experience the ſame comforts and the ſame conſolations, growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, till you ſhall drop theſe mortal bodies in the grave, there to remain in peace and ſilence,—and in an entire exemption from pain, from ſin and ſorrow, till the glorious morning of the reſurrection, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed to you, not " in flaming " fire to take vengeance," but in love and infinite compaſſion, with " enter thou into the joy " of thy Lord;" And in that day you ſhall ſay, " Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him

" and

" and he will ſave us; this is the Lord, we have
" waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in
" his ſalvation,"—Iſa. 25. 9. And " in that
" day you will come in the unity of the faith,
" and of the knowledge of the ſon of God, unto
" a perfect man, unto the meaſure of the ſtature
" of the fulneſs of Chriſt,"—Heb. 4. 13.—" and
" with all the ranſomed of the Lord ſhall you
" return, and come to Zion with ſongs, and
" everlaſting joy upon your heads; you ſhall
" obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſigh-
ing ſhall flee away,"—Iſa. 25. 10. Then ſhall
thy ſun no more go down, neither ſhall thy
moon withdraw itſelf, for the Lord ſhall be
thine everlaſting light, and thy God, thy glory
and they ſhall inherit the land for ever,—Iſa.
60. And now may " the ſpirit of glory and
" of God reſt upon you, the ſpirit of wiſdom
" and underſtanding."—" The ſpirit of know-
" ledge, and of the fear of the Lord, and the
" very God of peace ſanctify you wholly,"
" that in this ſtate of trial and diſcipline, you
" may attain the end of your creation, and in
" the future world, when the head ſtone ſhall be
" brought forth with ſhoutings of " Grace!
" Grace! unto it," " to the High and Lofty One
" that inhabiteth eternity, to the Lamb that
" was ſlain," and to the Eternal Spirit may be
your aſcription of equal honor and immortal
praiſe. *Amen.*